Elisa Torres

AP Literature and Composition

Mr. Lane

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Othello Excuse

Dear Desdemona,

Please excuse Othello for accusing you of having an affair with Michael Cassio and acting so strangely over the past couple of days. At this point, he is still convinced of your betrayal, although it is clearly not true. I know for a fact that someone lied to Othello in order to make him believe you were not being faithful. Although Othello’s actions seem very odd and unlike his usual calm behavior, you cannot necessarily blame him for believing a trusted friend and important person in his life. Since you probably have no knowledge of who exactly this trusted individual is, I will tell you right now that it is Iago. Othello is only partially to blame for this situation, since Iago instilled in him a horrible misconception regarding your relationship with Cassio. As you know, your relationship with Cassio is strictly platonic, but Iago is twisting that friendship in Othello’s mind. He makes it seem like you are being unfaithful by arranging opportunities Othello mistakes as a true affair between Cassio and yourself. For example, Iago took the handkerchief you misplaced after Emilia found it (III.iii.316-325). Iago put the handkerchief in Cassio’s possession, just so Othello would think you gave it to him. As you know, you simply misplaced the handkerchief, but there was no way Othello could believe you since Iago already started confusing Othello’s mind at that point. When Othello found out that Cassio had the handkerchief, he was furious. Since that was a gift from him to you, he was so distraught to discover that Cassio had the handkerchief.

You see, Othello does not really want to believe that any of the horrible things Iago told him are true, but he is simply too trusting of Iago. Honestly though, can you really accuse Othello of trusting Iago? Iago is able to gain Othello’s trust very easily, and he stated to Othello, “My lord, you know I love you” (III.iii.117) when Othello questioned if Iago loved him and would tell Othello the truth about Cassio. Iago always appears to be loyal to Othello, and that is the exact reason Iago persuades Othello so easily. Iago is the one mainly at fault in this situation. Othello simply loves you so much that it hurts him very much to think that you would ever betray him like this. Although you are probably thinking that Othello should simply discuss the situation with you, he truly thinks that he cannot trust you anymore. You seem to be an understanding person, so I hope you will take this information and discuss it with Othello as soon as possible. Not only will it save your relationship with Othello, but doing say may even save your life. I only say that talking to Othello will save your life because he is clearly on the verge of a breaking point, as you can tell by his manner as of late. I am fearful that he could do something harmful to you or himself if this situation is not resolved in a timely manner. Othello cares about you very much, and I do think that you should try to understand where he is coming from.

Sincerely,

Elisa Torres